

By Hoke Commissioners, For 3 Property Owners

Farm Use Evaluation Reductions OK'd

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The winds over the past weekend didn't do any extensive damage in Hoke County as far as I can determine. Some signs were blown down and many limbs on trees were torn from the trunk. This made Monday a clean up day for many here in Raeford.

The winds calmed down Sunday and the cool air and rain moved in Monday morning. The forecast is for freezing temperatures for Tuesday night. I don't know how it will affect the gardens, but from all reports the peach crop has already been destroyed.

The cool weather is supposed to last for the remainder of the week.

The Arts Festival Parade last Saturday morning helped to kick off the opening of the baseball season in Hoke County. The Blazers had their first game this past weekend.

The baseball season also started in the major leagues Monday, but with the weather the way it was in Hoke County, the teams further north might have to shovel snow off the fields to play. It is better to delay the start of the season because of the weather rather than because of a strike like last season.

If you plan to attend the Easter Sunrise Service at the Hoke High school stadium, it might not be a bad idea to take a blanket along with you to put over your feet. The service starts at 5:45 and it could be chilly at that time of morning.

The speaker for the service will be The Rev. Douglas Mark and his message will not be cut short because of the cool weather as he thinks this type of weather is summertime. The weather in Ireland isn't exactly like it is here in North Carolina.

So wrap up and go out Sunday morning and I'm sure that it will make your Easter the best ever.

Someone asked me last week why I didn't run the comment about the Carolina basketball team winning the NCAA championship as the first item in my column. Now of course this person happened to be an alumnus of the Chapel Hill school.

I told him that the column was usually written on Monday afternoon and that all but the Tar Heel item was ready before the game started. I wonder if Carolina had lost, would he have wanted it first?

The Rev. Douglas Mark told me last week in front of several people that he read this column every week and had to come to the conclusion that I was a Democrat.

Mrs. Neal McNeill, nee Miriam Ropp, exclaimed, "That isn't the half of it!"

Now I wonder why she would make a statement like that?

There was the largest crowd at the Hoke County Democratic Convention last Saturday afternoon that I can remember at an off-year election. Every precinct was well represented and seemed geared up for the meeting.

A resolution offered by the Antioch precinct, that the convention go on record opposing the four-year term for members of the state legislature, was adopted without an 'against' vote. I just hope that this will be the opinion of the state voters when this comes up on the ballot.

Congressman Bill Hefner braved the winds to come and speak to the convention and I believe that he made an impression on the Democrats in attendance.

Harold Gillis, party chairman, should be commended for his work

(See AROUND TOWN, page 16)

Adopt Resolution On Legislative Terms

Democrats Meet 'New' Congressman

Hoke County Democrats Saturday adopted a resolution supporting the present system of two-year terms for members of the General Assembly, chose their delegates to district and state party conventions, and met their "new" congressman, W.G. (Bill) Hefner of Kannapolis.

Hoke County has been moved to the Eighth from the Seventh Congressional District by General Assembly redistricting, starting officially in January. But county voters will participate in the Eighth's congressional election in November, and Hoke Democrats in the party primary before them if Hefner faces opposition for the party's nomination. So far Hefner is unopposed within his party. He was a convention speaker.

Hoke is leaving the Seventh District, represented by Democrat Charlie Rose of Fayetteville.

Saturday's meeting was the party's Hoke County convention, held in the Courthouse, and well attended. One said the crowd was the largest to attend a Hoke Democratic convention in many years.

Hefner, who spoke earlier in the day at the Scotland County Democratic Convention in Laurinburg, was introduced to the Hoke audience by John Balfour, chairman of the Board of Hoke County Commissioners, who is a candidate for reelection this year.

Harold Gillis, chairman of the county Democratic Executive Committee, presided and welcomed the visitors.

The invocation was given by Sam Morris of the Executive Com-

mittee, and the Pledge of Allegiance to the nation's flag was led by Katherine McPhatter, county committee first vice chairman.

Gillis then recognized all the party's announced candidates running for office and other local officials.

The convention elected Mrs. Neill (Stephanie) McFadyen, Jr.,

second vice chairman to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mrs. Laura McEachern.

Delegates to the Eighth Congressional District Democratic Convention scheduled for May 15 in Albemarle, and the State Convention, scheduled for June 12 in Raleigh, were chosen, as well as those to the sectional -- judicial,

State House and State Senate district sessions.

The resolution on keeping the length of each term in the legislature unchanged was the county Democrats' reply to a movement in the General Assembly to increase the terms of state representatives and senators to four years at a time.

Weather Conditions Still Dangerous

Woods, Brush Fires Hit Hoke

Woods and brush fires fanned by gusty winds blowing up to 45 miles per hour and stimulated by rainless weather kept State Forest Service and volunteer firemen throughout Hoke County busy last weekend.

Raeford was spared, however, Fire Chief Robert Jackson reported.

Robert Jones, Hoke County ranger for the state service, said that the winds and dry weather of Tuesday dried out the woods after Monday's rains to the point that "we are back where we started." He called it "one of the severest fire weathers."

Jones said that in view of the dry conditions of brush and forests all permits to burn outdoors were cancelled.

Hoke County had four fires during the weekend, he said. The largest broke out in the western part of the county in the Ashley Heights area Saturday between 2 and 3 p.m., and firemen fought it (See story & photo on page 16)



FOREST FIRE -- Forest and brush fires kept firemen including State Forestry Servicemen busy in the Sandhills area last weekend, including in Hoke County. These pictures show fire fighters working on an extensive blaze in the Ashley Heights area of Hoke and Moore Counties off N.C. 211 Saturday and Sunday. Hoke County State Forester Robert Jones and members of his crew, and firemen of the Crestline Fire Department based in eastern Moore County on 211, the Pine Hill Fire Department of western Hoke County, the McCain and North Raeford Fire Department fought the blaze. (Staff photos by Pam Frederick).

Variance Request For Housing Denied

The Raeford City Council Monday night by majority vote with one councilman abstaining accepted a City Planning Board recommendation to deny a request for a zoning variance that would allow construction of four-unit apartment buildings instead of the two-apartment duplexes permitted.

The councilman who abstained from voting was Bennie McLeod.

In another real estate matter, the council voted to annex a tract extending northward from North Fulton Street to U.S. 401. Avery Connell, owner of the property, made the request. He said part of the property is already in the city

limits. He added that the property is undeveloped.

The actions on the zoning variance and the annexation requests were taken after separate required public hearings were held.

The variance had been requested by Freedom Family, Inc., of Dunn. Charles Hosteler of Raeford, an attorney representing the company, told the council that the four-unit buildings would be one story high and contain a total of 48 residences of one and two bedrooms. About half the units would go to aging and handicapped people, the buildings would take up less and be "tighter" in energy economy among other points.

The buildings are planned for a site on South Main Street near the Holly Hills residential area.

The hearings was on an appeal from the Planning Board recommendation that the request for the variance be denied by the council. No reason for the recommendation was given.

Avery Connell's property lies on the south side of 401 and between North Fulton and North Magnolia Streets.

In other action at the council's regular meeting for April, the council voted \$3,500 for repairing and repainting playground equipment at McLaughlin Park and Robbin Heights playgrounds. City

Manager Ron Matthews said that the whole amount might be needed. He said the money would be taken from the capital reserve.

The council also approved purchase for \$8,623 on a state contract a 1982 Chevrolet Impala cruiser for the Police Department. Matthews said purchasing would save the city \$500 to \$1,000. He said delivery would be in the latter part of June.

During the meeting also, Mayor John K. McNeill, Jr., presented Bill Sellars a plaque in honor of his 20 years' service as a city fireman. Sellars also is assistant city manager and is city public works director.

Special Services Planned

Hoke Preparing For Easter Observance

Special Easter services are planned in Hoke County for the 1981 religious observance, and state, Raeford city and Hoke

County government offices will be closed Easter Monday.

Federal offices including the U.S. Post Office will have no Easter

holiday.

Among the special services the Raeford Ministers Association is sponsoring an Easter Sunrise Ser-

vice in the Hoke County High School stadium. The service will begin at 5:45 a.m., and the Rev. J. Douglas Mark will speak about the Apostle Peter in a sermon titled "The Man Who Missed Good Friday." Mark is associate pastor of Raeford Presbyterian Church.

Special music will be offered. The songs "Rise Again" and "Easter Song," will be sung by "Shine," a trio of First Baptist Church. The Revs. B.V. Childress, Tex Deaton, and George McKeithan also will be on the program.

In case of bad weather, the service will be held in the high school auditorium.

An Easter Service will also be sponsored by the Sandy Grove and Parker United Methodist Churches at Camp Rockfish. The service will be held in the pavilion area and will start at 7 a.m. Area residents are welcome to attend.

Hoke County schools will be closed after regular classes Friday afternoon for the holiday and will reopen at the regular time the morning of April 14. The school vacation had to be cut short to make up for class time lost because of severe winter weather.



ARTS FESTIVAL PARADE -- A parade Saturday morning officially launched the weeklong Celebration of the Arts '82 Hoke County Arts and Crafts Festival. Here is part of the procession on North Main Street. The displays and music and dance performances will continue through Friday. (Staff photo by Pam Frederick).

The Hoke County commissioners Monday allowed three property owners reductions in their 1982 reevaluations because the land is used for farming.

The reductions were authorized for the property of William M. Radford, to \$30,150 from \$38,150; Mary O. McNeill, one tract, to \$95,570 from \$169,940, another to \$29,889 from \$62,780, and another to \$40,370 from \$83,570; and Julian Wright, one tract to \$36,140 from \$61,340, a second to \$26,760 from \$50,360, and a third to \$130,060 from \$249,550.

The property owners had been unable to file their applications for land use value assessment of taxation of agricultural, horticultural or forest lands. Radford in a letter to the county commissioners explained he had been on temporary duty at other locations in his employment by the federal govern-

ment. Wright explained to the commissioners that he had asked for application forms but had not received them in time to meet the deadline.

Radford appeared at the meeting but did not speak. Mrs. McNeill, who lives in Warsaw, did not appear.

In other business during the regular monthly meeting, the commissioners adopted a resolution addressed to the U.S. Farmers Home Administration requesting that the federal agency not fund any apartment complex in Hoke County unless it has been channeled through and approved by the Raeford-Hoke County Housing Authority.

Commissioner Danny DeVane in introducing the resolution referred specifically to the proposed Lantern Lane project on N.C. 211 south.

The commissioners also authorized reimbursement to the State Department of Justice, \$1,753 and \$287 in federal Cooperative Education and Training Act funds which the department has disallowed. The commissioners hope to get the department to allow part of the \$287, however.

The Justice Department disallowed the \$1,753 because the contractor billed prime sponsor and was reimbursed in excess of the actual cost of workmen's compensation.

Of the \$287, a total \$97 was disallowed because the contractor billed the prime sponsor in excess of hours actually worked, according to documentation, and \$190 because the contractor billed prime sponsor was reimbursed in excess of actual cost of workmen's compensation.

The commissioners, however, hope to get a total \$97.09 allowed -- \$43.42 for Ruth King, \$25.76 for Grace Pierce, and \$27.91 for Wanda Roberts.

Grace Daramus of Raeford was named to the Older Adults Advisory Council of the Lumber River Council of Governments by the commissioners on recommendation of the Raeford Friendship Club. She was appointed to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of W.P. Phillips.

The commissioners set a public hearing for June 14 at 8 p.m. in the courtroom of the Courthouse on the county budget for 1982-83 and uses for the county's federal revenue-sharing funds for that year. The new budget is to be worked up.

Monday's meeting was a record for the commissioners for shortness of time -- about 30 minutes -- some of the commissioners noted. Usually a regular meeting runs from 9 a.m. to noon.

The commissioners also postponed their next regular mid-month meeting to April 20 from April 19 to allow the incumbent commissioners to attend the Hoke County PRA's "Meet the Candidates" meeting. Commissioners Mabel Riley, John Balfour and James A. Hunt, all Democrats, are running for renomination in the Democratic primary. Seven other Democrats and one Republican are running for the three seats also.

Hoke Sales Tax

Collections of Hoke County's one percent sales tax totaled \$26,756.76 in February, the State Department of Revenue reports.

The collections in January were \$30,077.20, and in February 1981 totaled \$26,712.47.